Waiving of Police verification for renewal of Passports

†736. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently taken a decision to discontinue the necessity of police verification for the renewal of passport if there is no change in residential address;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the said decision would come into effect?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (c) The Government of India, based on the recommendations of a Committee set up to review Passport Issuing System in 2001, issued instructions exempting the following categories of applicants from police verification;

(i) All re-issue/renewal cases within the same jurisdiction, except applicants from J&K.

(ii) Minors, if either of parents is holding a valid Indian Passport, except in case of applicants from J&K where age limit for exemption from police verification is upto 10 years.

(iii) Senior citizens, if any one of their adult children is holding a valid passport.

(iv) Government servants who submit proper No Objection Certificate from their respective authorities.

India's Stand on Iraq

737. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that UN Secretary General has declared American attack on Iraq as illegal;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereon; and

(c) how Government propose now to specify its stand on Iraq?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) Yes, Responding to media queries, the UN Secretary General had said in September 2004 "I have indicated that it was not in conformity with the UN Charter from our point of view, from the Charter point of view, it was illegal."

(b) and (c) India had consistently maintained that the military action in Iraq was not in conformity with the U.N. charter. This is also reflected in the resolution on Iraq adopted by the Parliament on 8 April, 2003.

Infiltration in Jammu and Kashmir

738. SHRI R.K. ANAND: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been increase in number of infiltration in Jammu and Kashmir during the last six months;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that training camps are still operating in PoK and the Pakistan Government are not taking steps to close them down;

(d) whether there was any meeting between Foreign Ministers of India and Pakistan recently; and

(e) if so, the details of the outcome of the meeting?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (c) As per available information, the level of cross border infiltration, which was low until May 2004, had increased during the months of June-July, 2004 but decreased during August, and the trend has continued. However, there is no evidence to suggest that Pakistan has taken long term oriented action to dismantle the infrastructure of support to terrorism, in the territory under its control, on a permanent basis.

(d) and (e) External Affairs Minister, Shri K. Natwar Singh, met the foreign Minister of Pakistan, Mr Khurshid Mrs Kasuri, in New Delhi on September 5-6, 2004 to review the overall progress in the Composite Dialogue. They exchanged views on carrying the process forward in an atmosphere free from terrorism and violence.